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Letter dated 30 May 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I am writing to draw your attention to the latest incidents in the ongoing campaign of Palestinian terrorism directed against the citizens of Israel.

On Monday evening, 27 May, at approximately 6.40 p.m. (local time), a Palestinian suicide bomber blew himself up at the entrance to a crowded shopping centre in the Israeli city of Petah Tikvah. The bomb was packed with nails and other objects to increase the pain and suffering of the victims. Witnesses reported seeing bodies sent flying through the air by the force of the explosion and blood, body parts, and other human remains were scattered about the scene of the attack. Two Israelis were killed in the explosion — an 18-month-old baby girl and her grandmother — and more than 50 others were wounded, several of them seriously. The Al-Aqsa Brigade claimed responsibility for this attack as well.

Also on Monday, Jerusalem police officers averted a major terrorist attack when a five-kilogram explosive was discovered by the entrance to a residential building in the French Hill neighbourhood. A police sapper neutralized the device; no one was injured.

On Tuesday night, 28 May, at approximately 11 p.m. (local time), an armed Palestinian terrorist entered the community of Itamar and indiscriminately opened fire on civilians. His first victims were two teenage students playing basketball outside their school, both of whom he shot dead. The terrorist then proceeded inside the school building where he opened fire on another group of students, killing one and wounding two others before his rampage was ended by a security guard. The Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, the terrorist wing of Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement, claimed responsibility for the attack.

Also on Tuesday, Albert Malul, a 50-year-old resident of Jerusalem, was killed when Palestinian terrorists ambushed his vehicle several hundred metres from the Burka Junction. His brother, Herzl, age 40, who was also in the car, was wounded and evacuated to a hospital in Jerusalem.

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These incidents are the latest in the continuing campaign of Palestinian terrorism that has been detailed in numerous letters since the onset of hostilities in late September 2000.

The Government of Israel holds the Palestinian Authority and its Chairman fully responsible for these incidents. The Palestinian leadership continues to lend financial and moral support to terrorist organizations, incite its people to violence and terror, collude with known terrorists, and permit terrorist operatives to operate freely in its territory.

Despite the tens of thousands of Palestinian Authority security personnel that Chairman Arafat has at his command, no action has yet been authorized to combat terrorist organizations that continue to operate with a free hand in full view of the Palestinian leadership and its security institutions. Recently there have been reports of terrorist organizations circulating pamphlets with instructions on how to construct a bomb from common household materials and how to infiltrate Israeli security and set it off amidst a crowd of civilians. Is putting an end to the free distribution of such material, and arresting known terrorists and confiscating their weapons, beyond the capability of 40,000 armed officers?

Chairman Arafat prefers a policy of duplicity, whereby he issues condemnations for the benefit of Western audiences while turning a blind eye to the unceasing efforts to kill and injure Israeli civilians emanating from the territories under his control. This dual policy even applies to attacks for which Chairman Arafat's own Fatah forces are responsible, as has been the case in a number of recent incidents including Monday's bombing in Petah Tikvah.

More than 20 months into the Palestinian terrorist campaign, we still await any signal from the Palestinian leadership that its calls for an end to terrorism are more than mere rhetoric. For Chairman Arafat's condemnations to be even mildly credible, they must be accompanied once and for all by action aimed at bringing such attacks to an end. Israel calls upon the international community to exert maximum pressure on the Palestinian leadership and compel it to fulfil its obligations to dismantle the terrorist infrastructure, arrest known terrorists, and bring an immediate end to incitement and the glorification of terror and suicide. Failure to do so will severely undermine efforts to return to a process of dialogue and negotiations that constitute the only available avenue for a peaceful settlement to the conflict.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 166, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**
Permanent Representative